

Prospectus



Birchgrove Primary School



Ysgol Gynradd Llwynbedw

Head Teacher's Welcome Message



Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome to Birchgrove Primary School. We know that choosing the right primary school can be one of the most important and challenging decisions for any parent, so we invite you to take this opportunity to get a real feel for our welcoming, community-focused school by exploring our prospectus and discovering more about what we offer.

Our vision is encapsulated in our school motto: "Where every child is a star" and accompanying statement: "Preparing children to step confidently into their future, a community learning together". This was drawn up by pupils, staff and Governors and is proudly displayed around the school.

We believe that every child has a unique and special value and it is our mission to nurture each of them to achieve their very best, in all aspects of school life. We pride ourselves here at Birchgrove on the extent to which we have built strong partnerships: between pupils, staff, families and governors; between our school and the local and wider community.

We are very proud of our pupils. As a happy and caring school, hard work and good behaviour are expected. We invest a lot of time and energy into making sure that the professionals who work with them maintain the highest standards. We encourage children to develop their talents and seek excellence in all that they do, whilst supporting each other and celebrating the achievements of others.

Our website and prospectus will only give you some idea of what we and our school have to offer. The best way to find out more is to come and visit us. Make an appointment to talk to us, have a tour of the school and meet the pupils and staff. We look forward to welcoming you.

Mr Simon Johns (Headteacher)

About us

We are an English medium primary school serving Birchgrove and the surrounding areas. Birchgrove Primary School has been at the heart of the local community since it was built in 1896. It stands on a site of over 1 acre in the heart of a popular residential and shopping area, close to major roads and the University Hospital of Wales. We are a Community Primary School admitting children from the year in which they are 5 until the age of 11. Eight classes are housed in the main building with a further six outside. In 2002 the school benefited from the opening of a new hall that provides spacious and modern facilities for Assemblies, P.E. activities, school concerts and visiting theatre groups, as well as P.T.F.A and community functions. It also includes kitchen and dining facilities for children who choose to have school dinners.

Pupils are organised into thirteen age-based classes, with all children working at a level suited to their needs. Teachers are supported by skilled Teaching Assistants, and pupils with additional learning needs receive targeted support from trained staff led by the ALNCo. Teachers receive regular PPA time, during which experienced teachers and HLTAs provide consistent classroom cover

Equal Opportunities:

Birchgrove Primary School celebrates the diversity of our pupils, community, Cardiff, and Wales. We prepare all pupils to live in an inclusive society and are committed to equality regardless of race, age, gender, faith, sexual orientation, language, disability, or background. We promote respect, challenge stereotypes, and encourage involvement from all parts of the community. The school opposes all forms of prejudice and discrimination, and any harmful language or behaviour will be challenged. We monitor and report incidents seriously and work with the local authority to help address intolerance across the city.



In line with the Equality Act 2010 we have an action plan in place to increase access to our school in the widest sense and ensure that teaching and learning is fully accessible to all pupils. This is an ongoing process, as different children will have different needs, but the main aims are to improve access for pupils and prospective pupils with disabilities to:

- Our school building & services
- The curriculum
- The provision of information in a range of ways

All children are treated as individuals and the steps we are taking are to ensure that children with a disability are treated as favourably as others in all aspects of school life.

Prospective parents are welcome to consult with us and visit the school in order to assess the provision we can make for their child.



Parent Involvement

As parents you will be invited to three open evenings each year. The first in the Autumn Term will be a general discussion on how your child has settled in their new class. The second evening, in the Spring Term, will provide a more detailed assessment of how your child is progressing and what steps may need to be taken to enhance continued progress.

Teachers may also have informal discussions with parents at the end of a school day or by inviting parents in. This is a two way process and, if you have any concerns, you should feel free to raise them with the class teacher initially and then a member of the senior leadership. If you need a lengthy discussion, you are advised to make an appointment at the end of the school day.

If you have a particular talent, or wish to help in school, you are very welcome to participate. Parents, grandparents and other voluntary helpers regularly assist on school trips, listen to children reading and help in after school clubs as well as with many other activities. They provide invaluable support to both teachers and children. Regular newsletters are sent out to keep you up to date with all events and can be found on the school website.



P.T.F.A (Parents Teachers and Friends Association)

There is a thriving Parent, Teacher and Friends Association, which is very supportive of the school. The committee organises many social and fundraising activities for children, families and parents. The considerable funds raised provide many extra resources, which benefit each and every child. All parents are automatically members of the association and are warmly welcomed at all events. New parents are particularly welcome. The committee is elected each year at the Annual General Meeting in the Spring Term and regular meetings are held thereafter. If you are unable to attend these meetings, help is always needed at the events and would be very welcome. News of current events can be found on the notice-board at the entrance to the school and on the PTFA Facebook page.



Admissions Procedures



Cardiff's Local Authority is responsible for applying the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend our school. We are an inclusive school that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities, regardless of gender, race, faith, sexual orientation, language or disability. The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. Our standard admission number is 60, with a maximum of 30 children in each class.

ADMISSION TO RECEPTION CLASSES

Children are admitted to reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday.

- All applications for Reception to year 6 are dealt with via an online service via this link:

<https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/resident/Schools-and-learning/Schools/Applying-for-a-school-place/Pages/default.aspx>

- A meeting for new parents/carers of children joining our Reception class will be held in the Summer term and details regarding a starting date will be given after this time.



Applications for children in other year groups can be made by the same link. If there is room in the appropriate year group; parents/carers will be invited to visit the school in order to make admission arrangements. If admissions are over-subscribed and we cannot offer a place, parents/carers may appeal to the Local Authority.



Transfer to High School

Children move to Secondary School in the September following their eleventh birthday. The school to which the majority of our pupils transfer is Whitchurch High. However, a place is not guaranteed. Admission to Whitchurch High School will be authorised by the school and not the Local Authority, as is the case with all other high schools in Cardiff. Parents will be given information during the terms leading up to the transfer and may apply to other secondary schools in Cardiff. Advice about this is given at the time. It is the parents' responsibility to secure a place for their child at a high school and we would strongly advise you to complete all the necessary paperwork promptly and adhere to deadlines. We have very well-established links with Whitchurch High School. In the months leading up to transfer teachers from the school visit our Year 6 children to talk to them about the move.



School Uniform

Our uniform is both practical and comfortable and gives the children a sense of pride in belonging to the school community. The official school uniform, with the 'Star man' logo, is available from YC Sports who have a shop in Whitchurch village and on Crwys Road. Further details of the full range of clothing available are included in your welcome pack. Pupils do not have to wear badged uniform with the school logo. Suitable alternatives are available from many other shops and supermarkets. The winter uniform is grey or black trousers, skirt or pinafore with a red or white polo shirt and a red sweatshirt, jumper or cardigan. In the summer, children may wear similarly coloured shorts and polo shirts or choose a red gingham or jersey dress. Pre-loved uniform is available to purchase from the PTFA. Details are included in your welcome pack.

In the interests of safety, could you please ensure that your child wears suitable shoes for school.

ALL items of clothing and footwear must be clearly labelled with your child's name either by sewing in a name tag or writing the name on the garment's label. Jewellery, apart from watches, should not be worn to school. Pupils with pierced ears should wear only studs. Apart from the risk of loss, there are many practical activities in which it constitutes a hazard to both wearer and other children.

P.E. KIT

The school PE kit is a yellow short-sleeved T-shirt, with the Star logo embroidered on the left hand side, together with black shorts or joggers. The school PE kit is also available from YC Sports or from other suppliers. Again, the star logo is not mandatory. Trainers or plimsolls should be provided for outdoor Games activities. All children must change from their everyday uniform for PE and Games activities. Should you decide not to purchase the official kit, we would ask that you provide similar clothing for your child. Fashion clothes are neither suitable nor safe for this curriculum area. For health and safety reasons, earrings should be removed, or taped over, before PE. Watches should be taken off and left in the safekeeping of the teacher. No other jewellery should be worn to school, as previously stated.

Lost property is kept in baskets by the headteachers office. It is kept there for two weeks and then bagged to be sent to a local charity shop. Although we make every effort to return property to its rightful owner, we always have an enormous amount of clothing and other items left at the end of every term. We would urge you again to ensure that all your child's clothing and possessions are clearly labelled so that we can return them to you promptly.

School Times

Classroom doors are open from 8:45am

Reception:

Morning session: 8.50am to 11:45pm

Afternoon session: 1.00pm to 3.30pm

Year 1:

Morning session: 8.50am to 11:55pm

Afternoon session: 1.10pm to 3.30pm

Years 3 & 4

Morning session: 8.50am to 12 noon

Afternoon session: 1.00pm to 3.35pm

Years 5 & 6

Morning session: 8.50am to 12.10pm

Afternoon session: 1.10pm to 3.35pm

Punctuality in the morning is very important in ensuring that children and classes are settled quickly for their first lesson. The class register is taken promptly and any late arrivals marked accordingly.

BREAKFAST CLUB & AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

Breakfast Club is free to all children in line with Welsh Assembly guidelines. It opens at 8.05am each morning when parents register their children and then leave them in the care of the Breakfast Club Supervisors. Unfortunately, places are limited and if there is not a place available, your child's name will be placed on the waiting list. Superstars Wales offer an after-school club for all children in the school. The club runs on site daily, from 3.30pm until 5.30pm offering a range of activities including sports, drama and craft. The cost per session is £9 which includes a snack.

PLAYTIMES

For pupils in years 1 to 6 there are two playtime sessions per day. One session takes place in the morning and one in the afternoon. Both are fully supervised by at least two members of staff. Pupils in reception classes have access to the outdoors throughout the day. During wet playtimes, children remain in their classrooms under supervision. For safety reasons pupils are not allowed to remain in the school building during normal playtimes, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

COLLECTING CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL

At the end of the school day children in Reception, Yr 1 & Yr 2 are to be collected from the doors closest to their classrooms. Yr 3, 4, 5 & 6 children are released from their classrooms. Children will not be allowed to leave until an authorised person is there to collect them. However, Year 6 children are allowed to walk to school and back home with parental consent.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Parents are always informed by email of any school closures. Whenever possible messages will also be sent by Seesaw. Six INSET days are held during the school year. You will be informed of these well in advance. Term dates can be found on the school and council websites.

CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

The school must be informed of any change of address, telephone number, email address, medical conditions etc as soon as possible in order that records are kept up to date. Provision of a current, emergency telephone number is also essential in case we need to contact you during the school day. Where parents live separately, details for both parents should be supplied so that information can be given to each parent if they so require.



Attendance

Our attendance record is very good and, in order to maintain this, you must inform us of the reason for every instance of your child's absence from school. This is done by phoning the school on the morning of the absence, or, if unable to call then an email must be sent. This should be carried out as soon as is practicably possible ideally on the first day of absence and certainly within the week. If we do not hear from you, the office will ring to ensure your child is safe. When you have advance knowledge of an appointment during the school day, we would be grateful if you could inform us prior to the absence.

HOLIDAYS

Holidays taken during term time are strongly discouraged and, in line with Local Authority guidelines, are recorded as unauthorised absences. For some absences, you may also be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. Please see the information on the school website for more information on when these may be issued.

SICKNESS AND ACCIDENTS

If your child complains of feeling ill during the school day their condition will be assessed by the teacher and a first aider, if necessary. Mid-day supervisors will bring the matter to the attention of the teacher on duty. Should we feel it advisable for them to go home we will contact you straight away. Your child will then be cared for until your arrival. If your child has been ill with sickness and/or diarrhoea, they should remain absent from school until 48 hours after the last bout of illness. This is in line with Public Health regulations in order to prevent the spread of infectious illness. If your child has any other form of infectious illness, and you are unsure of whether or not they should attend school, you should consult your doctor or the school for more advice.

Despite our best efforts, accidents do sometimes happen during school activities. If your child does have an accident, their condition will again be assessed by a qualified first aider. In cases of minor injury, your child will be treated immediately. If we feel that your child needs treatment that we cannot provide, or if it is preferable for them to go home, you will be notified immediately. They will be cared for until your arrival. In the rare case of emergency situations, it may be necessary for us to take a child for treatment at a local surgery or hospital. You will, of course, be informed of this. A record of all accidents that happen on the school site is maintained in line with Health and Safety policies.

Administering Medicine

Arrangements to administer medicine in school can only be made when a child is suffering from a long-term condition, or if completing a course of antibiotics, which needs to be taken more than three times a day. In such cases requests should be made in writing on the appropriate form obtainable from the school office. The form will clearly state the name of the child, the name of the medicine, the dose and the times of administration. Children with asthma should have ready access to their inhalers which must be labelled with the child's name and class. Class teachers should be advised of the condition.

Site Security

The health and safety of your child is our prime concern. To this end we have put the following measures in place:

- The school gates are locked by 9.00am and admission to the site after this time is only possible through the secure door at the office.
- The school gates are also locked at 3.45pm when after school activities may be taking place in school or on the yard. Parents need to collect children involved in such activities from the school office.
 - The site is covered by CCTV 24 hours each day.
 - The Caretaker patrols the site daily for possible hazards.
- Regular Health and Safety checks are undertaken throughout the school premises.
 - Children are alerted to fire procedures and fire drills are regularly practised.
 - The School operates a No Smoking policy.
 - Scooters should be dismantled at the school gates.
- Dogs are not allowed on the site unless they are a service dog or our school dog.

Child Welfare and Protection



We have a responsibility to ensure the welfare and protection of every child in our school. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have been trained in the procedures to follow should they have any concerns. They have a duty to share information where necessary and refer cases of concern to the appropriate agencies. The designated child protection officer and teacher in charge of Looked After Children within the school is Mr Simon Johns (Headteacher). The deputy officers are Miss Paula Broughton (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs Lucy Jones (ALNCo).

We aim to support looked after children with all aspects of their education, monitor their achievements and assist them in overcoming barriers to success, ensuring they achieve their full potential. We liaise closely with a range of agencies to support the child and ensure that a high quality personal education plan (PEP) is put in place.

Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for the conduct of the school within the broad framework of the Local Authority's policies. It is a voluntary body which meets regularly and has an important role to play in providing the forum for discussion of issues concerning the school including finance, buildings, staffing and curriculum. It plays a significant part in developing with the Headteacher and staff, the aims and objectives of the school and its community and generally supporting the school's endeavours. Inspectors found that our governors are very supportive of and knowledgeable about the school. The Governing Body is representative of the local community and includes community governors, local authority representatives, parents and staff. A full list can be found on the school website. Any of the Governors may be approached for discussion or advice on relevant issues.

Our Chair of Governors is currently Mrs Christine Salter who can be contacted via the school office on 02920 628204.



COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Birchgrove's complaint procedures follow the Local Authority guidelines. All complaints from parents will be dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible and are usually resolved at an early stage. The full complaints policy is available on the website or on request from the school office. In summary, the 3 stages are:

- Stage 1 – informal stage – raise concern with appropriate member of staff.
- Stage 2 – Headteacher investigation – contact a member of senior leadership team who will investigate.
- Stage 3 – Governors' review – write to chair of Governors to investigate.

School Meals

Universal free school meals are provided for pupils in line with the Welsh Government and local authority guidelines. Alternatively, pupils can bring a packed lunch. Cooked dinners must be ordered in advance via ParentPay.

For children having packed lunches, glass containers, fizzy drinks and sweets are not allowed. We also request that no nuts are included as we have children on site who have severe nut allergies.

A team of experienced Mid-day Supervisors and Teaching Assistants look after the children during the lunch break. The Headteacher and/or a Senior Leader is also on duty at this time.

Fruit Tuck and Drinks

Younger children are provided with a choice of fruit and vegetables each day for their snack. We ask for a contribution of £1.50 each week to help cover costs. This can be paid weekly or termly. For older children we run a very successful fruit tuck shop during morning and afternoon play sessions. A range of seasonal fruits and vegetables are on sale for the children and staff at a cost of 20p - 30p. Alternatively children may bring their own fruit tuck. Crisps, cereal bars and biscuits are not allowed at playtime. All children in the school are encouraged to bring in a bottle of still water daily. This will be kept in class for drinking when necessary and may be refilled at our water cooler. Modern research highlights the benefits of drinking water in aiding concentration. Free milk is also available daily for all children in the younger classes.



Our Curriculum



Since September 2022, our curriculum has been fully aligned with the Curriculum for Wales, and in recent years we have redesigned our provision to reflect its Four Purposes. Everything we plan aims to support pupils to become ambitious, capable learners, enterprising, creative contributors, ethical, informed citizens, and healthy, confident individuals.

Learning is organised through the six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs), with literacy, numeracy and digital competence embedded across all areas. Staff plan engaging, pupil-led learning experiences using the What Matters statements to ensure progression, creativity and real-world relevance. Estyn has recognised the authenticity and quality of these learning experiences.

All teachers contribute to ongoing monitoring, assessment and the School Improvement Plan, ensuring continuous development across the school.

Thinking Skills

As an accredited Thinking School, we place reflective, critical and creative thinking at the heart of learning. Pupils are encouraged to develop independence, collaboration and a positive Growth Mindset.

Welsh and Bilingualism

Welsh is taught progressively as a second language, with opportunities for incidental Welsh and bilingualism woven throughout daily routines and lessons.

Cynefin

Our curriculum places strong emphasis on cynefin, helping pupils understand their identity, heritage and place in Wales and the wider world. Annual celebrations such as our St David's Day Eisteddfod strengthen this sense of belonging.



Additional Learning Needs

From September 2021, the Special Educational Needs framework was replaced by a new and reformed system called Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET). The ALNET Act 2018 is just one aspect of the overarching ALN transformation programme. At the heart of these reforms is a focus on inclusion, putting children and young people at the centre and ensuring they are supported to reach their full potential. The overarching aims of the Bill are to create:

- A unified legislative framework to support children and young people aged 0-25 with ALN in schools and further education
- An integrated, collaborative process of assessment, planning and monitoring which facilitates early, timely and effective interventions
- A fair and transparent system for providing information and advice and for resolving concerns and appeals.

Definition of ALN according to the Act:

A child or young person of compulsory school age has ALN if he or she:

- a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or,
- b) Has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of the facilities for education of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

It is the responsibility of the Additional Learning Needs coordinator (ALNCo), teachers and governors to decide whether a child has ALN. When making this decision consideration needs to be given to a range of factors. Practitioners should refer to the definition of ALN within the act, have regard to the guidance on the application of this definition and apply it to the individual circumstances of the case. Where it is determined that the pupil has ALN, the ALNCo must prepare and maintain an Individual Development Plan, unless certain circumstances apply.

Individual Development Plans are statutory legal documents. Where additional learning provision is needed, this will be documented in the plan. Schools have a duty to ensure that this provision is provided and this will be reviewed and monitored as required.

Pupils who do not have Additional Learning Needs but who require some extra support with their learning will do so through a range of interventions run by trained teaching assistants and overseen by the ALNCo. This support will be documented through individual targets which will be shared with parents and reviewed regularly. The class teachers will track and monitor the progress of these children to ensure that the correct intervention is being provided at the right time. Interventions will either be carried out individually or within a small group. Depending on the level of support needed, some interventions will take place outside of the classroom. A member of the Governing Body is named as having a particular interest in, and responsibility for, additional learning needs. If you would like further information about the changes that are happening, please follow the link:

<https://www.gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-and-education-tribunal-wales-act>

PROVISION FOR MORE ABLE AND TALENTED CHILDREN

In our school we aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all of our children. We plan our teaching and learning in such a way that we enable each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. This policy ensures that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as 'more able' or 'talented'. The term 'more able' refers to children who possess a high level of academic ability (potentially or demonstrably) in one, or more, subject areas. Children may have an exceptional talent in a particular area. This could be within the school curriculum, but talents such as leadership, creative imagination or highly developed social or sporting skills may also be acknowledged.



Homework

It is our policy for children to undertake homework, in some form, from Reception onwards. Initially homework will be in the learning of key words and it will gradually build up to more formal homework as the children progress through the school. This may involve reading, spelling, times tables, research (learning logs) or other maths work. We hope that this will aid their progress during the Primary years and be an introduction to the disciplines of independent home learning. The class teacher may also send work home relating to the current context for learning. Children from year 2 access online maths programs– these are engaging online learning resources to support and develop their learning in Maths. Pupils will be set homework on these platforms regularly.



Assessment and Reporting



A Baseline Assessment of a child's ability is made on entry to school. Thereafter, assessment of progress is an on-going process. Class tests are given at intervals and standardised tests are used annually in Years 2 to 6 to track individual progress. Welsh Government Reading and Mathematics Procedural and Reasoning tests are also used in Years 2 to 6.

Whilst tests are useful indicators of a child's progress, they also give information on learning needs. The results of tests are used diagnostically to indicate future teaching needs and to identify those children who may have additional educational needs. Parents are invited to discuss their child's progress at two Parents' Evenings in the year and will receive a comprehensive written report at the end of each academic year

ECO SCHOOL

In order to make environmental awareness an intrinsic part of our school life and ethos, we are a registered Eco school, and have achieved the Green Flag. We have an Eco club who meet regularly to discuss and act upon issues relevant to the school and they have been involved in carrying out an environmental audit, recycling, discussing the playground facilities and helping with the school grounds.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The staff at our school provide many opportunities for children to become involved in extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes or after school. These include sports such as football, choir, sewing, art, writing, film, chess, IT, Lego Club and STEM club. A full list of current opportunities can be obtained from the school office.

SCHOOL VISITS AND VISITORS

Educational field trips add another dimension to a child's learning enabling them to experience what they have read or been told about at first hand. Such visits are, therefore, planned as part of the curriculum we offer. They may include visits to historical sites, places of worship or geographical locations studied. Parents' permission for such visits is sought in advance and we may, when necessary, ask for a voluntary contribution to cover costs. Please see our Charging policy. Risk assessments are carried out by our experienced staff in advance of any visit. We also take many opportunities to invite visitors to school. They may be individuals to talk to the children or theatre and music productions to give performances. Some of these visits are funded by the PTFA for which we are very grateful.



Behaviour

As a school, our emphasis is on positive behaviour management rewarding by praise, and other incentives, children who act and behave in the expected manner. Clear boundaries of acceptable behaviour are continually reinforced. The reward system in our school includes the following:

- Weekly whole school Achievers' Assemblies.
- Class stars awarded weekly.
- Reward stickers and stars.
- Positive comments on children's work.
- Positive oral encouragement and praise.

Small breaches of discipline are dealt with by the class teacher or Mid-day supervisors during dinner breaks. More serious cases of poor behaviour are reported to Senior Leaders. If such behaviour persists, parents will be informed and invited in to discuss the problem.

Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

As a school we have a statutory duty to report any incidents of a racist or homophobic nature. Sanctions for unacceptable behaviour are understood and accepted by the children. These may include:

- Discussion of the reasons for the behaviour.
- Writing about the problem.
- Missing play or lunch breaks.
- Accompanying a duty teacher during break time.

We have a policy on Anti-Bullying which is available for inspection or on our website.



Term Dates

Period	Start	End
Autumn Term 2025	Tuesday 01 September	Friday 18 December
Autumn Half Term 2025	Monday 26 October	Friday 30 October
Spring Term 2026	Monday 04 January	Friday 19 March
Spring Half Term 2026	Monday 8 February	Friday 12 February
Summer Term 2026	Monday 5 April	Tuesday 20 July
Summer Half Term 2026	Monday 31 May	Friday 4 June

INSET Days

1st & 2nd September 2025

13th February 2026

1st May 2026

12th June 2026

20th July 2026





Thank you for reading our prospectus

For further information contact:

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Heath

Cardiff

CF14 1RR

Website: www.birchgrovecardiff.co.uk/

Telephone: 029 20 628204

Email: birchgroveprm@cardiff.gov.uk